

Contemporary Latin American Politics
Political Science 238 / 002
Spring 2016

Instructor: Bilyana Petrova

Meeting times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30 – 3:45 (Phillips 228)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00am - 12:00pm or by appointment

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Overview and Course Objectives

This course provides an overview of Latin American politics in the 20th century through the contemporary period. More specifically, the class focuses on three periods in Latin American political development: the onset of industrialization and populist politics in the 1930s and '40s, the decay of democracy and the authoritarian regimes of the 1960s and '70s, and the most recent period, which is characterized by democratization and economic liberalization. Students in the course will explore a broad range of topics related to the historical, political, and economic development of the region and by the end of the semester will be able to employ concepts such as populism, import-substitution industrialization, corporatism, authoritarianism, democratization, and neo-liberalism to explain political trends in Latin America. Moreover, students will be able to identify the contemporary challenges that Latin American governments and citizens face and offer competing explanations for how states have arrived at this point.

While some political-economic trends are similar across Latin America, the region's states also vary significantly with regard to their histories of colonization, ethnic composition, level of economic development and human welfare, and system of government. In this course, students will gain an overview of both broad trends and cross-country diversity through the study of select cases: Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Peru, and Venezuela.

Course Organization

The course will meet twice a week for one hour and fifteen minutes. Class meetings will combine interactive lecture and discussion of the assigned readings. Therefore, students are expected to come to each session ready to actively engage in the discussion of the assigned materials. Hopefully, our conversations will allow us to better understand the main trends that have shaped Latin America's political, social, and economic reality throughout history.

Required Texts:

Thomas E. Skidmore, Peter H. Smith and Jamen N. Green. 2013. *Modern Latin America*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Seventh or Eighth Edition).

Additional reading materials will be made available electronically on the Sakai webpage for the course.

Evaluation and Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation (10%)

Regular attendance is essential for your successful performance. Therefore, I expect you to come to class each week. Every student is allowed two (2) unexcused absences throughout the semester. Missing more classes will result in a 5-point reduction of your participation grade per absence. Six absences will lead to an automatic failure of the class.

It is essential that you come to class prepared. This means that you are expected to complete and reflect upon the required readings before each class session so that you can actively engage in the discussion. Identify the main topics, think about potential questions, and try to place each text in the broader context of the class and to relate it to other topics that we have discussed.

While attendance is essential, it does not equal participation. Just showing up without participating will not earn you a grade higher than 78% (C+). I understand that different people have different personalities, and that some of you might feel uncomfortable speaking. However, participation in the in-class activities is a way for you to engage with the material and to show that you have mastered it (or to indicate that you are unclear about certain aspects and would like a clarification). Please consider making an effort and participating in the discussions. I also value other forms of participation, such as coming to office hours, asking questions at the end of class, and communicating via emails.

2. Map Quiz (5%)

We will have an in-class map quiz on Wednesday, January 20th. The quiz features all countries in continental South America and Central America. You will be provided with a blank map and expected to correctly name each country. Hopefully, this will help us going forward as it will enable you to situate countries and territories. I will go over Latin America's political map in class on Wednesday, January 13th.

3. Research Paper (20%)

Each student will write an analytic research paper on a topic of their choice. This is an opportunity for you to learn more about a topic that you find interesting. A one-page proposal is due on Wednesday, February 24th. Each student is expected to meet with me during that week or the following week in order to receive feedback on their proposal. Papers will be written in an academic style and should be 10 pages long (Times New Roman, 12pt font size, 1 inch margins). They are due at the beginning of class on April 20th. A late paper will result in a letter-grade reduction per day late. Turning the proposal late will lead to a 3-point decrease per day of your paper grade.

4. Presentation (10%)

Each student will deliver a brief presentation on their research paper. The presentation should clearly state the intellectual problem that informs the paper, the conclusions that the author has drawn from his / her work, and the way the paper is related to the broader topics that we have discussed in class. Student presentations will be 10-minute long, with 5 additional minutes devoted to questions. They will take place at the end of the semester. Every student will sign up for a presentation slot during the first week of classes.

5. Mid-term Exam (25%)

An in-class mid-term exam will be given on March 2. The exam will cover all topics discussed during the first half of the semester. You are responsible for mastering all course

materials, including aspects of the reading that may not have been discussed during class. Further information about the format of the exam will be provided during the semester.

6. *Final Exam (30%)*

An in-class final exam will be given on Friday, May 6th at 8am. The exam will cover the material discussed during the *entire semester*. Further information will be provided later in the semester.

Make-Up Work: There will be no make-ups for either exam unless there are documented extraordinary circumstances that prevented you from taking the exam. Additionally, there will be no extra credit assignments.

Honor Code: All work must adhere to the University's Student Honor Code. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. For details of the code, see: <http://instrument.unc.edu/>

Email policy: While I am always happy to communicate via email, emails are not the best way to discuss substantive questions concerning course material. I encourage you to come to office hours if you would like me to clarify concepts or discuss issues in depth. Please be professional when you write emails.

Grade questions: At times students may have questions about their grades on exams or papers. I am happy to discuss any grading-related issue during office hours. However, in order for me to re-grade any assignment, you need to provide a written note (hard copy or email) explaining in detail why the grade should be changed. I will then re-grade the entire assignment. I reserve the right to raise or lower your grade accordingly.

General guidelines:

✓ Ask questions. When in doubt, ask for clarification. There are no stupid questions. If you feel confused about a particular issue or concept, chances are that other students might also have difficulties understanding it. Some of the best discussions spur out of student questions. I will welcome any question that you might have.

✓ Listen to your colleagues and respect their opinions. We are all different, and these differences are bound to translate in different views and perceptions. Be conscious and tolerant of these differences and respectful to your peers. Accept that not everyone will agree with you or share your ideas. I would like to create a comfortable, relaxed and respectful environment where everyone will feel free to express their views without the fear of being mocked or attacked.

✓ If, at any point during the semester, you experience difficulties, have concerns, struggle with the material, or feel unclear about something and need help, please talk to me. I am available during my office hours or, if they are not convenient for you, by appointment. Communicate with me on a regular basis. There is a lot we can do early in the semester and very little once the semester is finished.

Class Schedule and Assignments

Week 1: Class Overview and Introduction to Latin America

January 11: Introduction & Syllabus

January 13: Historical Overview: From Conquest to Independence

Skidmore, Smith and Green. *Modern Latin America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, Chapter 2: The Colonial Foundations”.

Week 2: The Politics of Development

January 18: No Class - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 20th: Map quiz and Colonial Legacies

Week 3: Democratic Breakdown & the Debt Crisis

January 25: Liberalism and Import-Substitution Industrialization

Skidmore, Smith and Green, chapter 12. Up to, but not including, “Revolutionary Movements”.

Kingstone, Peter. 2011. *The Political Economy of Latin America*. London: Routledge. Chapter 2 (available on Sakai).

January 27: The Breakdown of ISI & the Populist Coalition

Collier, David. “Overview of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Model,” in *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, (pgs. 19-32).

Schamis, Hector. 1991. "Reconceptualizing Latin American Authoritarianism in the 1970s," *Comparative Politics* 23 (2): 201-220.

Week 4: Implementation and Consequences of Neoliberalism

February 1: The Debt Crisis and Introduction to Neoliberalism

Kingstone, Peter. 2011. *The Political Economy of Latin America*. London: Routledge. Chapter 3 (available on Sakai).

Williamson, John. “What Washington Means by Policy Reform” (83-89)

February 3: Student debate on Neoliberalism

Huber, Evelyne and Solt, Frederick, 2004. Successes and failures of neoliberalism. *Latin American Research Review*, 39(3), pp.150-164.

In-class: "Fear the Boom and Bust": Keynes vs. Hayek Rap Battle

Week 5: Democratic Transitions

February 8: Overview of Democracy in Latin America

Smith, Peter. *Democracy in Latin America*. Chapter 1.

February 10: Democratization

Smith, Peter. Democracy in Latin America. Chapter 2.

Karl, Terry L. 1990. "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," in Comparative Politics, 23 (1), 1-23 [23].

Week 6: The Rise of the Left in Latin America

February 15th: The Resurgence of the Left

Cleary, Matthew. 2006. "A 'Left Turn' in Latin America? Explaining the Left's Resurgence." *Journal of Democracy* 17:4 (October 2006), pp. 35-49

Levitsky, Steven and Roberts, Kenneth. 2011. The resurgence of the left in Latin America. *Baltimore: John Hopkins University*. Introductory chapter.

February 17th: The different types of Left in Latin America

Roberts, Kenneth. "From the 'End of Politics' to a New 'Left Turn': The Repoliticization of Social Exclusion in Latin America," pp. 1-25.

Week 7: The Consequences of the Left Wave in Latin America

February 22: No class. Work on identifying a research topic.

February 24: The Effect of the Left Turn

Filgueira, Fernando, Luis Reygadas, Juan Pablo Luna, and Pablo Alegre. 2011. "Conservative Modernization: the Politics and Policies of Incorporation in Latin America." (Pgs. 245-277).

Week 8: Catch-up session and Midterm Exam

February 29th: Review session. Please come with questions about the exam.

March 2nd: In-class midterm exam.

Week 9: Chile.

March 7th: Introduction to Chile.

Skidmore, Smith, and Green. Modern Latin America. Chapter 10.

March 9th: Neoliberalism and Transition to Democracy

In-class: Commanding heights, Episode 1

Week 10: Spring Break. No class.

Week 11: Venezuela

March 21: A Brief Overview of Venezuelan Politics

Karl, Terry Lynn, 1987. Petroleum and political pacts: The transition to democracy in Venezuela. *Latin American Research Review*, 22(1), pp.63-94.

March 23: Chavez' Administration.

Levitsky, Steven and Roberts, Kenneth. 2011. The resurgence of the left in Latin America. *Baltimore: John Hopkins University*. Chapter 9: Venezuela: Hugo Chavez and the Populist Left

Week 12: Mexico

March 28: Mexico:

Skidmore, Smith and Green. Chapter 3. Mexico.

March 30: Mexico After the PRI

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2005. "The Demise of Mexico's one-Party Dominant Regime: Elite Choices and the Masses in the Establishment of Democracy," in *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, ed. F. Hagopian and S. Mainwaring. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 13: Brazil

April 4: Introduction to Brazil

Skidmore, Smith, and Green. Chapter 11. Brazil.

In-class activity: documentary on educational quotas in Brazil

April 6: The Rise of the PT

Levitsky, Steven and Roberts, Kenneth. 2011. The resurgence of the left in Latin America. *Baltimore: John Hopkins University*. Chapter 13: Brazil: The PT in Power

Week 14: Cuba

April 11: Introduction to Cuba

Skidmore, Smith, and Green. Chapter 5. Cuba.

April 15: Cuba's Road to Reform

Eckstein, Susan Eva. "Chapter 4," in *Back from the Future*, (pgs. 88- 127).

Cohen, Roger. 2008. "The end of the end of the Revolution," *New York Times Magazine*.

Week 15: Peru and Student Presentations

April 18: Peru: democracy without parties

Levitsky, Steven. 2013. "Peru: the Challenges of a Democracy without Parties," in *Constructing Democratic Governance*. (Pages 282-315)

April 20: Student Presentations

Week 16: Student Presentations and Conclusion

April 25: Student Presentations

April 27: Bringing it all together.